

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes No. 305, No. 306, and No. 307 due to my spouse's health situation in California. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2581. I would have voted "nay" on the Passage of H.R. 2581—Verify First Act. I would have also voted "nay" on the Passage of S. 1094—Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Mariel Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

RECOGNIZING OPHELIA GAINES

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable career of Mrs. Ophelia Gaines, who will retire as executive director of Concerted Services on June 30, 2017.

Mrs. Gaines' career with Concerted Services, a nonprofit action group that focuses on fighting poverty throughout 28 counties in southeast Georgia, has spanned nearly 44 years.

Mrs. Gaines began her work with the company in 1973, traveling door to door in low-income communities, educating families on how to enroll in programs like Head Start, Energy Assistance, and Senior Nutrition.

Mrs. Gaines' altruistic career continued with her decision to teach social work classes at both Georgia Southern University and Savannah State University, enabling young people to carry on her work throughout southeast Georgia.

I am proud to rise today to recognize Mrs. Gaines, and thank her for all of her outstanding contributions to our local communities and to the lives of our fellow Georgians.

WARRIORS CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, last night the world watched my home team, the Golden State Warriors, end a historic season by bringing home their second national championship in 3 years.

The Warriors, led by unanimous Finals MVP Kevin Durant and legendary players Steph Curry, Draymond Green, and Klay Thompson, showed the power of teamwork both on and off the court.

The team is an example for young people, showing that if you can work together and trust one another, you can accomplish anything.

Mr. Speaker, these finals against the talented Cleveland Cavaliers were a

thrill to watch. We saw basketball at its best—incredible talent and a real passion from both sides. Thank you to the Warriors team for making our dreams of another championship a reality.

This remarkable team has made history as one of the best ever, winning a record 15 straight games in the playoffs and clinching a 16-to-1 postseason record.

Thank you to Coaches Steve Kerr and Mike Brown, the entire Warriors staff, and all of the talented players on their well-deserved victory.

Throughout this journey, Warriors fans have stayed loyal and faithful, and they deserve this victory as well.

My dear late mother, Mildred Massey, was the Warriors' biggest fan, and I know she is smiling from above. I can't wait to celebrate with all the Warriors fans and players back in Oakland. Go Warriors, go Oakland, go Dub Nation.

CREATING ACCOUNTABILITY AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the passage of the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act. This important legislation will create a culture of accountability at the VA and begin the process of restoring the VA's sole mission of providing high-quality care for our Nation's veterans.

For far too long, the VA has been plagued with scandal. From years' long wait lists to out-of-control bonuses, the VA needs real reform.

In their selfless service to our great Nation, our veterans have sacrificed so much to protect us. They shouldn't be plagued with difficulty accessing the care that they need and deserve.

As the mother of an Active-Duty U.S. Marine, I am sympathetic to the needs of our veterans. It is among my top priorities to make sure that we advocate for a better, more accountable VA. On behalf of the veterans of the 22nd District of New York, I am pleased to see this legislation pass with bipartisan support.

Today, we are correcting a wrong that has hurt too many of our Nation's heroes. I look forward to seeing the President sign this measure into law and have full confidence in VA Secretary Shulkin's ability to implement the important reforms contained in this critical piece of legislation.

RECOGNIZING SAN PEDRO HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOFTBALL TEAM

(Ms. BARRAGÁN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the San Pedro High

School girls softball team who late last month reclaimed their crown as L.A. City Section Division I champions.

On the night of Friday, May 19, the Pirates won their first city title in 8 years and 17th overall. Star pitcher Cindy Robles persevered through illness to throw a four-hitter with three strikeouts, illustrating her toughness after coming down with a 102-degree fever earlier in the day.

Her teammates were behind her every step of the way, always making the key play at the necessary moment. By rallying together and continually picking each other up, the Pirates girls softball team represents the true spirit of California's 44th Congressional District.

No matter what adversity we might face individually, our community always finds a way to rally together in pursuit of our common goals. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to these strong young women and all they represent.

EXPORT AMERICAN LIQUIFIED NATURAL GAS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week, Cheniere Energy, headquartered in Houston, Texas, delivered its first liquified natural gas shipment out of the Sabine Pass terminal to northern Europe, to the Netherlands, and to Poland. This follows shipments to southern Europe from earlier this year.

Put simply, this is a tremendous game changer. Exporting LNG is not just an economic issue, it is a geopolitical security issue. These shipments help thwart Russian aggression and weaken Russia's stranglehold over Europe, and it is about time.

Under Secretary Perry's leadership, the Energy Department is finally approving licenses for LNG terminals to ship LNG overseas.

Our natural gas is cheaper and more abundant in supply than anywhere in the world. Harnessing our domestic energy resources and exporting some of it to our friends and to our allies around the world makes sense for our economy and for our national security.

We should apply the Blue Bell ice cream philosophy to our domestic energy resources. It is: Use what we can and sell the rest.

And that is just the way it is.

STUDENT LOAN DEBT BURDEN

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, Americans are more burdened by student loan debt than ever. The statistics are truly stunning. They owe over \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt spread out among 44 million borrowers. That is about \$600